

INFO FLASH 28/10

EU INSTITUTIONS

European Commission

(22/10) EU mobilises international donors to support Rohingya refugees and countries in the region. Today the European Union, along with the United States, the United Kingdom and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees co-hosted the International Donors' Conference in solidarity with Rohingya refugees and countries in the region. The EU mobilised a total of €96 million for Rohingya refugees in 2020 for humanitarian, development cooperation as well as conflict prevention support. Full press release [here](#).

(21/10) Eradicating human trafficking: Persistent risks call for strategic approach. Today, the Commission is presenting its [Third Report on the progress made in the fight against human trafficking](#). Taking stock of measures taken since 2017, the report highlights recent trends in human trafficking, the particular complexities in the context of the coronavirus pandemic, and remaining challenges that the EU and Member States must address as a matter of priority. Full press release [here](#).

(20/10) EU steps up support for Africa's Central Sahel countries. Today, the European Union, Denmark and Germany and the United Nations co-host a virtual Ministerial Roundtable on Africa's Central Sahel region, with the participation of donors and international organisations, as well as the countries concerned: Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger. The event will discuss longer-term perspectives for countries in the region to overcome the spiral of violence and humanitarian crises they are currently facing. It also aims at mobilising support for the region, especially as coronavirus pandemic increases humanitarian needs. Full press release [here](#).

(7/10) Commission launches new 10-year plan to support Roma in the EU. The European Commission has today adopted a [new 10-year plan](#), including a [proposal for a Council Recommendation](#), to support Roma in the EU. There are seven key areas of focus: equality, inclusion, participation, education, employment, health, and housing. For each area, the Commission has put forward new targets and recommendations for Member States on how to achieve them, both of which will serve as important tools to monitor progress and ensure that the EU makes more headway in providing the vital support that so many Roma living in the EU still need. Full press release [here](#).

(30/09) Rule of law: First Annual Report on the Rule of Law situation across the European Union. The European Commission has today published the [first EU-wide report on the rule of law](#). Today's report includes input from every Member State and covers both positive and negative developments across the EU. It shows that many Member States have high rule of law standards, but important challenges to the rule of law exist in the EU. It also reflects relevant developments stemming from the emergency measures taken by Member States due to the coronavirus crisis. The report covers four main pillars with a strong bearing on the rule of law: national justice systems, anti-corruption frameworks, media pluralism and freedom, and other institutional issues related to the checks and balances essential to an effective system of democratic governance. Full press release [here](#).

European Parliament

(20/10) 77% of Europeans insist EU funds be linked to respect for Rule of Law. A majority of EU citizens supports a larger EU budget to overcome the pandemic. Public health is the priority, followed by economic recovery and climate change. In a new survey commissioned by the European Parliament and conducted at the beginning of October 2020, nearly eight out of ten participants (77%) across the EU support the concept that the EU should only provide funds to Member States if the national government implements the rule of law and democratic principles. At least seven in ten participants agree with this statement in 26 EU Member States. Full press release [here](#).

European Council / Council of the EU

(26/10) EU-African Union relations: joint communiqué of the AU Peace and Security Council and the EU Political and Security Committee. Full joint statement [here](#).

(29/09) Council finalises its position on the Horizon Europe package. The Council today finalised its position on the proposed regulation establishing Horizon Europe, the EU framework programme for research and innovation for the years 2021 to 2027 (Horizon Europe regulation) and on the proposed decision on the specific programme implementing Horizon Europe (specific programme decision). Full press release [here](#).

Others

(23/10) Eurobarometer - Latest Eurobarometer survey (July-August): Economic situation is EU citizens' top concern in light of the coronavirus pandemic. In a troubled period marked by the coronavirus pandemic, trust in the EU remains stable and Europeans trust the EU to make the right decisions in response to the pandemic in the future. In the new [Standard Eurobarometer](#) survey released today, European citizens identify the economic situation, the state of Member States' public finances and immigration as the three top concerns at EU level. The economic situation is also the main concern at national level, followed by health and unemployment. Full press release [here](#).

(20/10) EIB - UNDP and EIB expand partnership to support governments in tackling global crisis. The European Investment Bank (EIB) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) have signed a new partnership agreement to scale up their support to countries facing situations of emergency caused by epidemics, natural disasters, conflict and other types of fragility. This agreement will enable both institutions to reinforce the resilience of partner countries and contribute to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The immediate focus will be to address setbacks, mainly caused by the COVID-19 crisis, in Eastern and Southern neighborhood, Central Asia and Africa. Full press release [here](#).

(15/10) Committee of the Regions - The Covid-19 crisis can deepen Europe's demographic decline, regions and cities warn. Mr Karácsony's opinion highlights that Europe's ageing population, low birth rates and the worsening unequal distribution of the population require a coherent policy response at all levels of governance and across all EU policies. It particularly insists on the link between demographic change and the improvement of living conditions everywhere. Full press release [here](#).

(15/10) Committee of the Regions - Empower EU regions and cities to protect employment and social rights. The EU and its Member States must empower their cities and regions to protect employment and social rights: this is the call of the European Committee of the Regions (CoR) to counter the devastating social effects of the Covid-19 pandemic. The assembly of EU's local and regional representatives also asks to strengthen the skills base for recovery and to support regional and local authorities in managing the green and digital transitions. Full press release [here](#).

(14/10) EASO - Asylum applications remain 31% lower than in 2019. Figures [released](#) by the European Asylum Support Office (EASO) show that the impact of COVID-19 restrictive measures remains evident across the EU+ . Data show that asylum applications in August were down slightly from July (almost 43 000 applications), and significantly below pre-COVID levels. In January 2020, 65 692 applications were registered. Full press release [here](#).

(8/10) EASO - EASO welcomes German Presidency approach to prioritise EU Agency for Asylum. In 2020, the Agency has registered 40% of all applications in Greece, Italy, Cyprus and Malta, ranking it 5th if it were an EU Member State. Speaking at informal video-conference of EU home affairs ministers on 8 October 2020, the Executive Director of the European Asylum Support Office (EASO), Nina Gregori, expressed support for the European Commission's balanced, yet ambitious, Pact on Migration and Asylum. While recognising that political divergences remain amongst Member States, Ms. Gregori emphasised that the Pact outlines a real possibility to step forward on all aspects of the proposed asylum processes and to achieve clear, fast and more efficient EU migration management. Full press release [here](#).

(30/09) EIB - Championing economic opportunities for women in Africa - Development Partners International's (DPI) latest fund to become the first 2X Flagship Fund. The European Investment Bank (EIB), alongside CDC Group plc (CDC), the UK's development finance institution, Germany's DEG, FinDev Canada, FMO, Proparco, SIFEM and SwedFund International, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Development Partners International LLP (DPI), a leading pan-African private equity firm with \$1.7 billion of assets under management, to become the first 2X Flagship Fund. 2X Flagship Funds are part of the 2X Challenge, a multilateral initiative launched by the DFIs of the G7 countries, with the objective of mobilizing \$3 billion to support projects that empower women and enhance their economic participation. Vehicles awarded status as 2X Flagship Funds are established, high performing private equity funds, focused on emerging markets that have committed to investing with a gender lens using the 2X criteria. Full press release [here](#).

(29/09) EEAS - UN and EU sign agreement to enhance cooperation and strengthen response in peace operations. The United Nations and the European Union signed an agreement today in the margins of the 75th session of the General Assembly to enhance cooperation and strengthen collective response in peace operations and crisis management. The "Framework Agreement Between the United Nations and the European Union for the Provision of Mutual Support in the context of their respective missions and operations in the field" was signed by the UN Under-Secretary-General for Operational Support, Atul Khare, and the Head of EU Delegation to the United Nations, Ambassador Olof Skoog. Building on the success of our joint achievements, this Agreement reaffirms that partnerships are essential to address the growing scale and complexity of challenges to international peace and security. Full press release [here](#).

COUNCIL OF EUROPE

(30/09) Committee of Experts on Combating hate Speech starts its work. During its first two-day meeting (29-30 Sept. 2020) the expert committee ADI/MSI-DIS determined the scope and structure of a future Committee of Ministers' recommendation on a comprehensive approach to combating hate speech within a human rights framework. The committee is composed of government experts elected by the Council of Europe Steering Committee on Media and Information Society (CDMSI) and the Steering Committee on Anti-discrimination, Diversity and Inclusion (CDADI), and independent experts. Over 50 participants attended the meeting online, including further Council of Europe member States representatives, representatives of other intergovernmental organisations and civil society organisations. Full press release [here](#).

CIVIL SOCIETY

(19/10) EUROCITIES - What role for cities in Roma inclusion? "Hope has never trickled down, it has always sprung up", quoted European Commissioner for Equality Helena Dalli in her keynote address on the third day of an online exchange between cities on the rights of Roma people. The debate, which the Commissioner noted was a very timely one, came just days after she announced the new EU strategy for Roma inclusion, equality and participation. The quote, which references social activist Naomi Klein, was in fact used to highlight one of the central aspects of the new EU strategy: the need to work with local communities through participatory measures in order to build dialogue and trust. Full press release [here](#).

(19/10) ICMC - New EU Pact on Migration and Asylum Is Not Yet the Fresh Start Needed, NGOs Argue. Some elements of the new Pact on Migration and Asylum for the European Union (EU) constitute a positive change in tone. However, taken as a whole, the document does not significantly counter the unsatisfactory aspects of the current system, argue a group of NGOs. Full press release [here](#).

(19/10) ICMC - Could the COVID-19 Pandemic Be an Opportunity to End the Practice of Detaining Migrants? Is there any good news in the COVID-19 pandemic? On the issue of migration detention, there just may be. Overcrowding, poor hygiene standards and little access to health care or personal protective equipment are generally trademarks of migrants' detention facilities. The pandemic gave us a clear signal that this is unacceptable, writes Stéphane Jaquemet. Full press release [here](#).

(19/10) EUROCITIES - Integrating Cities Conference IX: When cities and volunteers build an inclusive society. Our very first online Integrating Cities Conference takes place at a time when integration is moving up on the policy agenda of the EU. As such, the European Commission's Action Plan on Integration and Inclusion, which will be released by the end of 2020, will set the policy context in which a closer involvement of cities in designing integration policies is indispensable. This year's conference, Invest in local solidarity – cities and volunteers building an inclusive society, is organised in the framework of the VALUES project – Volunteering Activities to Leverage Urban and European Social integration of migrants, and co-hosted by the city of Nuremberg, partner of VALUES. It will focus on building cohesion and inclusive society at the local level, by involving and engaging communities and citizens. Full press release [here](#).

(16/10) EUROCITIES - Attracting international talent in cities. Cities are looking into new ways to attract international talent and provide incentives for migrants to settle and work in their territories. European societies are ageing fast and are therefore in need of immigration to uphold socio-economic standards, counteract the pressure put on social systems and maintain the essential infrastructure of our economies. One tool to achieve this is Tampere's [Strategic Programme on International Talent Attraction and Migration](#), a first of its kind in Finland. Mari Taverne, leading Tampere's work on this topic, says the city's vision is: "Tampere – the best for you – an attractive and renowned city for international talent". Full press release [here](#).

(6/10) ECRE - Joint Statement: The Pact on Migration and Asylum: to provide a fresh start and avoid past mistakes, risky elements need to be addressed and positive aspects need to be expanded. The commitment to a more human approach to protection and the emphasis on the fact that migration is needed and positive for Europe with which the European Commission launched the Pact on Migration and Asylum is welcome. However, this rhetoric is reflected only sparsely in the related proposals. Instead of breaking with the fallacies of the EU's previous approach and offering a fresh start, the Pact risks exacerbating the focus on externalisation, deterrence, containment and return. Full statement [here](#).

[PUBLICATIONS](#)

Caritas - [Caritas Europa first take on the new EU Pact on Migration and Asylum](#)

Council of the EU General Secretariat – [Think Tank Review](#) (September)

ECRE - [AMIF: incentivising resettlement, relocation and integration, not Dublin returns](#)

ECRE - [Policy Note: AMIF: Incentivising Resettlement, Relocation and Integration, Not Dublin Returns](#)

EIGE – [Gender and Migration](#)

EMN/OECD - [Webinar: Maintaining labour migration in essential sectors in times of pandemic](#)

OECD - [Sustainable Reintegration of Returning Migrants](#)

IOM - [Africa Migration Report: Challenging the Narrative](#)

EPRS - [EU External Migration Policy and the Protection of Human Rights](#)

EPRS - [Hotspots At EU External Borders: State Of Play](#)

EPRS - [In the name of COVID: An Assessment of the Schengen Internal Border Controls and Travel Restrictions in the EU](#)

EPRS - [Upholding human rights in Europe during the pandemic](#)

ERGO Network - [The role of Social Economy in supporting Roma social and economic inclusion](#)

Eurodiaconia - [Promoting shared prosperity in the European Semester: taking stock of the 2020 cycle and launching the 2021 Semester](#)

ICMC - [How to Address Climate Change-Related Displacement](#)

ICMC - [New Roadmaps Show Steps for Better and Sustainable Migration in West Africa](#)

ICMC - [We Need To Look at How Families, Not Just Individuals, Are Affected by Displacement](#)

ODI - [Migration survey sampling: a pragmatic 'how-to' guide](#)